

REMARKS

Claims 24, 26, and 32—38 are now pending in the application. Claims 35-38 are added and find support throughout the specification as originally filed.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the pending rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 25 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keng in view of Midcap in view of Janis in view of Wagner and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,447,080 to Meier.

Amended claim 25 recites a overboot in combination with a foot portion. Each of the foot portion and the overboot includes a corresponding plurality of concentric ribs. At the outset, Applicant disagrees that Keng, Midcap, Janis, Wagner and Meier are combinable. The devices disclosed in each of these references are adapted for specific foot portions and do not contemplate combinations of foot portions and overboots of the type recited in claims 25 and 26.

Assuming arguendo that the cited references are combinable, their combination still does not disclose all the elements of amended claim 25. In particular, the cited references fail to disclose the combination of a foot portion having concentric foot ribs and an overboot having concentric overboot ribs. Therefore, claim 25 is patentable over the cited references. Claim 26 depends from claim 25 and, at least for this reason, is also patentable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 25 and 26 is respectfully requested.

Claims 32 and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keng in view of Midcap in view of Janis in view of Wagner in view of Meier and in further view of Thorp. Claim 33 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keng in view of Midcap in view of Janis in view of Wagner in view of Meier in view of Thorp and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,947,882 to Levasseur.

Amended claim 32 recites a overboot in a combination with a foot portion. Each of the foot portion and the overboot includes a corresponding plurality of concentric ribs. The arguments made above in connection with claim 25 are repeated by reference for claim 32 for references cited in connection with claim 32. Therefore, claim 32 is patentable over the cited references. Claims 33 and 34 depend from claim 32 and, at least for this reason, are also patentable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 32-34 is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully submitted that added claims 35-38 are patentable on their own merits, and also as ultimately dependent from claim 32.

Claim 24 is cancelled without prejudice.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the

Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 2-2-2004

By: MK
Maria Comninou Reg. No. 44,626
Stephen T. Olson Reg. No. 36,626
Attorneys for Applicant

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600

[MAC/]